

Preserving the environment through integrated recovery and disposal.

AUTHORITY MEETING MINUTES
November 18, 2024

APPROVED

Board Members Present: Chairman Kenneth Long, Vice Chairman Vincent Bono, Steven Boucher, Robert Comis, James D’Onofrio, Barbara Freeman, James Franco, Nancy Novak (via Zoom), Treasurer Richard Redmond (via Zoom) and James Williams

Authority Staff Present: Joshua Olbrys, Jodi Tuttle, Joseph Artessa, Eileen Brinck, Justin Fitch, Hailey Hutchinson, Pat Lisandrelli and Andrew Opperman

Others Present: Authority Counsel Kevin Martin

Chairman Long called the November 18, 2024, Authority Board meeting to order at 4:30 PM and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion was made by Mr. Bono, seconded by Ms. Freeman, and passed to approve the September 16, 2024, Authority Minutes.

At 4:32 PM a motion was made by Mr. D’Onofrio, seconded by Mr. Franco, and passed to open the Public Hearing on the Authority’s Proposed 2025 Budget.

Executive Director Joshua Olbrys and Comptroller Joe Artessa presented an overview of the proposed 2025 budget through a PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Olbrys was pleased to announce that the Authority will maintain tipping fees for municipal solid waste, sludge, local solid waste and source separated organics/food waste for 2025. The Authority will continue to offer two reduced tip fee programs to assist Oneida-Herkimer Counties and its municipalities for disposal of debris following a disaster, such as a flood, and will assist Industrial Development Agencies related to Brownfield clean-up and IDA projects. Mr. Olbrys attributed the ability to keep tipping fees low to the Authority having such an integrated and expansive system. Mr. Olbrys announced that there will be no fee for recycling for the 34th consecutive year. Mr. Olbrys reviewed waste volumes for 2025. He explained that these projections are based on conservatively tracking six months of waste volume totals in 2024. He pointed out increases in construction and demolition material are related to the 2024 tornado in the City of Rome, as well as the Authority’s regional demolition program. Mr. Olbrys reviewed recycling revenue by commodity. While tipping fees continue to be the main driver of Authority revenue, the Authority has started to see a steady increase in revenue from the sale of recyclable materials. Mr. Olbrys stated that the out-of-county recyclables processing revenue has slightly increased with the projected annual tonnage from Oswego, Lewis and Fulton Counties.

Mr. Olbrys noted that the Authority will continue to operate two engines at its power facility, as per its agreement with WM Renewable Energy through June 2025.

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Authority Board Secretary

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The Authority projected six months of landfill gas revenue in anticipation of construction of the renewable nature gas operation coming online in 2026. Carbon credit revenue is budgeted through September 2025 with projected revenue of \$600,000.

Authority Comptroller Joseph Artessa presented the Authority's proposed 2025 budget system expenditures. Mr. Artessa noted an increase to the allocation of funds for the Recycling Center due to the need for facility updates and repairs. The allocation of funds for the Authority's Administrative Office will decrease in 2025 due to an eliminated job position, while the Authority's Landfill will see an increase due to planned facility projects. The Authority's Eastern Transfer Station in Utica will remain steady in budget between 2024 and 2025, while the Western Transfer Station in Rome will increase. Mr. Artessa stated that overall, the Authority is requesting \$1,000,000 more in system expenditures for 2025. The Authority's 2025 proposed capital plan equals \$8,325,000, with a total proposed budget of approximately \$30,000,000.

Mr. Olbrys reported that the 2025 proposed landfill reserves total \$2,400,000 [\$800,000 landfill equipment replacement and \$1,600,000 landfill liner extension]. The 2025 proposed capital plan totals \$8,325,000 with projections through 2029 and includes system-wide heavy equipment and vehicles, and landfill cell closures and expenditures for landfill gas system expansion that will be funded through an established reserve.

Comptroller Joseph Artessa reviewed 2025 proposed revenues by category, 2025 expenses by departments, and 2025 expenses minus capital by category. Mr. Artessa announced that the Authority is reaching the end of its debt service on the 2006 bonds and that the Authority will have no debt after 2026.

Mr. Olbrys said that the proposed budget totals \$30,300,000 in system revenues/expenses including \$6,600,000 in municipal revenues/expenses. He then reviewed the proposed 2025 budget for the six municipalities in which the Authority administers the respective municipal programs. He noted that City of Utica Solid Waste Service Charge fees will not increase in 2025, and the cost of City blue bags will also remain unchanged.

Authority Board Secretary Jodi Tuttle confirmed that there were no public comments received on the proposed 2025 budget. However, a local hauler that was present at this public hearing raised concerns over lack of verification and the fairness of fees being charged to non-contract vs. contracted haulers disposing of construction and demolition debris (C&D) with dump trailers at Authority facilities. Following a brief discussion, Mr. Olbrys offered to contact the hauler to further discuss the concerns raised.

At 5:32 PM, a motion was made by Ms. Freeman, seconded by Mr. Comis, and passed to close the Public Hearing.

Chairman Long re-opened the regular meeting of the Authority.

There were no public comments received for the regular public comment period.

Mr. Olbrys said that Resolution No. 17 before the Board would approve a reduced tip fee for the City of Rome clean-up from the July 16, 2024 tornado.

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Mr. Olbrys stated that the City of Rome suffered property damage to the former St. Mary of the Assumption Church, located on 208 West Liberty Street, resulting in an estimated 6,000 tons of disaster debris.

Resolution No. 17 was introduced by Mr. Boucher, seconded by Mr. Bono, and passed approving a reduced tip fee for the City of Rome clean-up from the July 16, 2024, tornado.

Recycling Coordinator Eileen Brinck announced the winners of the Authority's recent Plastic Film Challenge. The winners, Sauquoit Elementary and Camden High School, will have the opportunity to be featured in a video with "Binny" on the Authority's website. There were 12 participants in total. All participants will be receiving participation awards.

Ms. Brinck also announced the winners of the Authority's annual Green Halloween Costume Contest. First and second place winners received Amazon gift cards, and the third-place winner an Authority swag bag.

Board Member Barbara Freeman spoke about a course she recently taught at MVCC titled, "Your Innovative Solid Waste System." Ms. Freeman stated that her goal in teaching this course was to make people realize the scope of our solid waste system, that it's an evolving system, when better technologies come along that the Authority investigates and often implements them, the Authority is nationally recognized, and that this is a self-funded system with no tax money used. Ms. Freeman taught a variety of topics, including a segment on the Regional Landfill. Ms. Freeman thanked Executive Director Joshua Olbrys, former Executive Directors Hans Arnold and William Rabbia, Recycling Coordinator Eileen Brinck, Director of Recycling Emily Albright, and Authority Comptroller Joseph Artessa for their knowledge and assistance in preparing course material. She also encouraged utilizing the Authority's website [www.ohswa.org] as it contains valuable information.

At 5:48 PM, a motion made by Mr. Comis, seconded by Mr. D'Onofrio, and passed to go into executive session to discuss proposed litigation. Chairman Long noted that there would be no public business conducted, following the executive session.

At 6:16 PM, a motion was made by Mr. Bono, seconded by Ms. Freeman and passed to come out of executive session and to adjourn the regular meeting of the Authority.

Respectfully submitted,



Jodi M. Tuttle
Authority Secretary